Besides, a National Dairy Plan is under consideration of Government to increase milk production through substantial investment for better productivity and infrastructure for growing milk procurement, processing, marketing and quality assurance. It proposes to assist high milk potential districts on loan and grant basis through a consortium of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and National Cooperative Development Corporation. The low milk potential district will continue to be assisted under the dairy development schemes of Government of India. The plan will also cover the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra.

Apprehension of virus capable to destroy wheat yields

3409. SHRI D. RAJA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
KUMAR DEEPAK DAS:
SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a warning made by the United Nations (UN) that a rapidly sprading virus Ug-99 capable of destroying entire fields could wreak havoc in India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what preventive measures are being taken to protect our wheat fields against this virus attack, and at the same time increase wheat production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations and warned wheat producing nations including India about the spread of Ug-99, an African race of black (stem) rust fungus of wheat.

(b) According to experts, the effect, speed need the route of the movement of the fungus is unpredictable in near future. Therefore, at present, it is only an apprehension that this African race may reach India.

A vigil is kept on the movement of this race by Directorate of Wheat Research, Karnal, through international collaboration. Indian Council of Agricultural Research, in collaboration with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT), Mexico has taken steps to identify varieties possessing resistance against the new race of the stem rust fungus. A regular surveillance for pest and disease emergence in the country is conducted to take emergency measures, wherever required, through the Central Integrated Pest Management Centres, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the State Agricultural Universities and Departments.

Also, the Plan quarantine regulatory system in the country prevents the introduction and spread of exotic pests and diseases that are destructive to crops by regulating/restricting the import of plant material and plan products. Post entry quarantine inspection is undertaken to ensure that imported plant material is free from any pests and diseases.

A National Food Security Mission has been launched to increase the production *inter-alia* of wheat by 8 million tonnes by the end of the Eleventh Five Year Plan.